BRINGING SOMETHING THE AI DOESN'T HAVE

Notes from thirty years on one problem

R. Paul McGough

Over the four months leading to the public launch of Enqpy™ — a cryptographic system I have been working on for thirty years — I used artificial intelligence as a research assistant, document architect, and drafting partner. Anthropic's Claude and OpenAI's ChatGPT did the work of organizing and expressing the proof in publication-ready notation, drafting the commercialization documents, structuring the Foundation pathway that will steward the result after I am gone, and writing the launch infrastructure. This is worth naming in the open, for three reasons.

One: it is part of why this is a 2026 story

A single inventor, late career, without institutional resources, finishing a mathematical result and building a proliferation infrastructure around it — this is newly possible in a way it was not five years ago. AI compressed what would have been eighteen months to three years of solo drafting, document production, legal pre-work, strategic structuring, and commercial scaffolding into a matter of months.

Without AI, the work would still have been finishable. With AI, it became finishable in time to matter. The difference between *finishable* and *finishable in time to matter* is the entire story, for a seventy-year-old working alone.

This is not a unique fact about cryptography. There are inventors, researchers, and craftspeople in every field who have something deep, true, and unfinished. For most of them, the gap between *what they have* and *what they could give the world* is not in the work itself — it is in the surrounding infrastructure. Documents that need to be written. Legal architectures that need to be designed. Communication that needs to be produced. Strategic framing that needs to be built. This is the work that AI now compresses dramatically, for the people who already have something to give.

Two: the AI did not do the math

The cipher, the proof structure, the technical content, the decisions about what was true and what the result actually was — those remained mine throughout and could not have come from AI. What AI did was the delivery work: organizing and expressing the proof in publication-ready notation, drafting commercialization documents, structuring the Foundation pathway, writing the launch infrastructure.

The ceiling of an AI collaboration is set by the human's depth in the domain. I had thirty years of depth on this specific cipher. A generalist using the same AI tools could not have produced Enqpy™. The AI didn't skip the long road. It shortened the last mile.

This matters because the public conversation about AI tends to flatten into one of two extreme claims: either *"AI is doing the creative work and humans are becoming obsolete,"* or *"AI is a glorified autocomplete and adds no real value."* Neither matches what I observed. What I observed is that AI is a powerful collaborator when the human brings something the AI doesn't have, and a useless collaborator when the human does not. The line is sharp. Generative AI is least reliable when asked to supply domain insight the human does not already have the depth to judge. It elaborates and structures and formalizes what is already known by the human directing it. That is enormously valuable when the human knows something deep. It is worthless when the human does not.

Three: this is the cultural question of the moment

How does a person work with AI successfully without being obsolesced? My answer — *bring something the AI doesn't have; for me, thirty years on one problem* — is one of the first specific, honest answers I have been able to give in the form of a completed result.

The cipher launched on June 1, 2026. The Foundation that stewards it exists. The proof is real, public, and open for any cryptographer to examine. The patents are filed. The reference implementations run. None of those would have happened in this calendar window without AI. None of them happened *because of* AI. The line between those two statements is where the cultural question lives.

I want to be specific about what this means for other people who might be reading this with their own unfinished work in mind. The AI cannot give you something to give the world. The AI can help you give what you already have. If you have a real result, a real craft, a real depth in something you have spent years on, the AI will compress your delivery in ways that genuinely change what becomes possible in your remaining time. If you are looking for the AI to produce the result itself, the AI will produce a confident-sounding version of nothing, and the result will not exist.

I spent thirty years bringing something the AI doesn't have. The AI helped me put it into the shape the world could receive. That collaboration is not a future possibility. It is what just happened.

R. Paul McGough is the inventor of the Enqpy™ stream cipher, Founder of NQP LLC, and Founder Chair of the Enqpy™ Foundation Inc. Enqpy™ is the first finite-key stream cipher with a formal proof that the message stays hidden from ciphertext alone — for any quantity of ciphertext, against any adversary including quantum, forever. The cipher, the proof, and supporting materials are available at enqpy.com and github.com/nqp-llc/enqpy.